



EPA is conducting soil sampling near a former lead smelting plant in Newark, NJ

Community Update

October 2012

WHY IS LEAD A PROBLEM?

Lead is a toxic metal that was used for many years in paint and leaded gasoline. Lead poisoning can cause a number of harmful health effects, particularly in children under the age of six.

Exposure to lead in soil can occur when children play in the dirt and put their hands or dusty toys in their mouths. Lead can also get into your body by breathing or swallowing lead dust, or by eating soil or paint chips containing lead.

WHAT IS LEAD SMELTING?

Lead smelting plants re-refine scrap or used lead materials into metallic lead of a higher purity. Such material can be the lead plates from batteries and lead pipe or sheets that contain lead. Secondary smelting can be responsible for releasing large amounts of lead into the surrounding environment.

The smelting process can be a major source of lead fume emissions. Lead dust and smoke can be released during the smelting process, and slag contaminated with lead may be left over after the smelting process.

WHY IS THE EPA SAMPLING SOIL IN MY COMMUNITY?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is investigating potential lead contamination in the soils associated with the Barth Smelting Corporation Site. The Barth Smelting Corporation, which was located at 99 Chapel Street in Newark, NJ, was a secondary lead smelter that operated from the 1940s until approximately 1982. The property has since been sold and is now an operating cargo company.

WHERE WILL EPA BE SAMPLING?

EPA will be collecting soil samples from unpaved areas adjacent to the former Barth Smelting facility. These areas will include the playground area at the Terrell Homes housing complex along Riverview Court, and at residential backyards along Chapel Street. Several soil samples will also be collected at the location the former Barth Smelting facility.

Soil samples will be analyzed for lead and other metals to determine if the operations at the former Barth Smelting facility have contaminated the soil at the surrounding properties. Sampling is scheduled to begin during the week of October 29, 2012.

EPA representatives will be in the community on:

Wednesday, October 24, 2012
from 3:30 - 5:00pm and 6:30 - 8:00 PM
at the
XXXXXXXXXXXX
Newark, NJ

To answer any questions or concerns you might have.

If you would like additional information, please contact:

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Or toll free at (800) 346-5009

EPA Regional Public Liaison:

EPA Region 2 has designated a public liaison as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express concerns, or register complaints about Superfund. The public liaison for EPA's Region 2 office is:

George Zachos
(732) 321-6621
zachos.george@epa.gov

Or toll free at (888) 283-7626

Visit EPA's Web Sites at:
www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/removal

HOW CAN I HELP?

The EPA will need access to residential backyards which have exposed soils or grasses. We would encourage all property owners with homes along Chapel Street near the former Barth Smelting facility to provide EPA access and participate in the sampling event. There is no cost associated with this sampling.

HOW WILL I GET THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION?

EPA anticipates completing the soil sampling in November 2012. The report detailing the results of the investigation is expected to be completed in early 2013. EPA will provide copies of the report to the community and will host public information sessions in early 2013. EPA representatives will be in the community to explain the results, and answer any questions residents may have about the work that was conducted.

EPA'S REMOVAL PROGRAM

EPA conducts investigations, like the one here in Newark, at properties where oil or hazardous chemicals may have been released into the environment.

The cleanup process begins with discovery of a Site or notification to EPA of a possible release of a hazardous substance to the environment. Sites are discovered by various parties, including citizens, State agencies, and EPA Regional offices. Once these sites are discovered, EPA will evaluate the potential for a release of hazardous substances from the site. This evaluation is done through collecting environmental samples and searching through historical documents.

If EPA determines that a release is imminent or that a release has occurred, steps will be taken to determine and implement the appropriate response to secure the release and to clean up the threats posed by the release of hazardous substances into the environment.